1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1935) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS



and rice. An Indian who takes no precautions against these birds is sure to lose his entire yield, irrespective of the amount planted. The only antidote is to have a guardian stationed in the plots throughout the daytime during the season so that he may at once repel the intruders. This is achieved by shouts or a variety of missiles—stones, palm nuts, and clay balls hurled with the hand, with slings (hũkaipẽ'rča), or with a pellet bow.

Among the Rąmkõ'kamekra and Krahõ' I have seen boys setting snares for parrots. To a hoop about 20 cm. in diameter and spanned by a network of cords they attach a dozen nooses of tucum fiber (Rąmkõ'kamekra) or, among the Krahõ', of horsehair. After placing some rice ears or similar lures below these snares, they tie the hoop in horizontal position to a wooden fork, which in turn is fastened to the top of as long a bamboo pole as possible. The entire contraption, which is visible from a considerable distance, is erected in the plantation, and as soon as the parrots pounce upon the rice ears their feet are caught in the nooses (pl. 17, *a*, *b*).

White neighbors are wont to mock at Rąmkõ'kamekra farmers, alleging that they raise nothing or at least nothing worth while and that they subsist by theft and begging. Few take the trouble even to look at the Indian plantations. Yet toward the close of 1930 these scoffers were obliged willy-nilly to acknowledge publicly that the Indians had planted considerable crops. At that time part of

Fig. 5. Digging stick. 1/10 nat. size.

Maranhão suffered from a famine, for the manioc crop had failed over a wide area so that the generally indispensable flour made from this plant was lacking. In Barra do Corda the scarcity forced the local officials to ration the sale of what little was to be had. At the peak of this plight the Rąmkõ'kamekra suddenly appeared with several horseloads of manioc flour and saved the townsmen since by an odd chance they alone had saved their yield. In the meantime, not only the half-starved Guajajára from beyond the Rio Corda had billeted themselves on the residents of Ponto, but even the Neobrazilians came to offer the Rąmkõ'kamekra their labor in return for manioc. When I reached Barra do Corda in 1931 and inquired in a shop whether good flour was to be had, the owner answered, "Very good flour, indeed; it's from the aldea Ponto!" Yet in this town many "whites" had declared categorically that they would never eat anything prepared by "these nauseating beasts" (*esses bichos nojentos*). Many Indians are deterred from ampler production of manioc flour for sale only by the lack of means of transport, for hauling a flour sack on one's back over a distance of seventy-eight kilometers is something of a hardship even for a Timbira educated as a log racer.

Rąmkõ'kamekra economic life was most significantly affected during the last twenty years by the Indians' turning to intensive preparation of manioc flour and to rice cultivation. At present these originally alien articles of food are about to gain ascendancy both in the kitchen and, next to basketwork, in trade. Agriculturally the Rąmkõ'kamekra have advanced farther since their contact with civilization than the Guajajára, whose aboriginal farming was anciently far more intensive, but whose productivity has since rather diminished than grown.

Even today the Indians in part use their aboriginal planting stick, which is invariably of very hard wood, either pau roxo or pau candeia, 75–100 cm. in length, round and flattened spade-fashion at the butt (fig. 5). Sometimes this flattened